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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, November 7, 1933.

Hello folks: Did you listen to the 4-H club program on the Farm and Home Hour last Saturday? Did you hear those club workers tell about the hundreds of cans of fruits and vegetables and all of the supplies that they had on their pantry shelves and in their cellars for winter? The thing that struck me was that these folks must have grown a lot of fruits and vegetables the past summer otherwise they could not have put up so much for their winter supply. In other words you must have the materials before you can fill the tin cans and glass jars. Another point, the canning process does not improve the quality of the products and you must have good, fresh fruits and vegetables to put into the cans and jars if you expect to get good products out of them.

In my brief talk today I want to urge many of you to carefully consider the matter of growing fruits for home use. There are conditions and circumstances where it will be best to purchase the supply of fruits for home use, but the chances are that if you depend upon buying on the market the family will often go without fruit when they really need it. I doubt if it will pay any of you to attempt to grow everything you need or want in the line of fruits and it will be best to confine your efforts to the production of the kinds that are adapted to your soils and climate.

Among the standard or tree fruits to be considered for the home fruit garden the apple heads the list for most sections but the grower must be prepared to spray or dust the trees if good fruit is to be produced. Peaches, cherries and plums also require protection from insects and diseases. Pears are subject to blight, in fact there is not - - - - - a single tree fruit that can be grown to reasonable perfection without spraying or dusting to control insects and diseases.

Of the small fruits strawberries are the most universally grown, in fact you can grow strawberries in practically every part of the country. You folks who live in Florida and in Southern Texas can have ripe strawberries very early, in fact practically all winter in certain localities. As the season advances northward strawberries are the first ripe fruit we get from our gardens and I don't know of anything nicer or that repays you more for your work than a good garden patch of strawberries. And here's another point about strawberries for the varieties that have firmness and good shipping qualities are not as a rule the best for home use and in selecting varieties for the home planting you should get some of the more delicately flavored varieties like the Southland for the south, Dorsett for the intermediate sections and Howard 17, one of the old standbys, for the northern sections. There are plenty of good varieties of strawberries for the home garden but these are among the best.

Grapes are another of our important fruits for home use and there are kinds and varieties that are adapted to pretty nearly every section of the country. You folks who live in the south should by all means have a patch of dewberries, either the old standby the Lucretia or the newer Youngberry or Young Dewberry. For you northern folks there is a whole list of varieties of raspberries

that follow the strawberries in season, then come the blackberries that are adapted for growing in so many sections... In case you live in the sections having acid soils you may want to experiment with blueberries. You folks who live in the Great Plains area extending from northern Texas to the Canadian line have your difficulties when it comes to growing your own supply of fruit. Considerable improvement both in methods of growing and in varieties for this section have been made during recent years so that now many of you folks in the wind-swept country are growing some pretty good fruit. The main point is to get varieties that will not winterkill.

I want to mention two or three important points in connection with the planting of the home fruit garden. First of all do not plant on low land where the soil may be properly drained or where frosts are liable to kill the blossoms. Locate your fruit garden on high ground where the drainage, both air drainage and soil drainage are good. Second, locate your fruit garden on good soil with plenty of depth for the tree roots to spread in. Third, plant only the kinds of fruit and the varieties that are adapted for growing in the region where you live. Fourth, give your fruit trees and your small fruits good cultivation and care right from the start. Select only good, healthy trees for planting but give them the proper care. Proper care includes cultivation, fertilizing, spraying and protecting the trees from mice, rabbits, salamanders and from hogs or other livestock.

Remember, you do not need a large area planted to fruit for home use, one-half acre to an acre is generally sufficient to produce all of the fruit of the various kinds for the family and some for the neighbors. Have the fruit garden near the house if possible and include in it the kinds of fruits and the varieties that will insure you a supply of fruit extending over the greater part of the summer and well into the winter. I have about three-fourths of an acre in my home place and on it I have 28 fruit trees, 14 grape vines, 4 rows of raspberries each 50 feet long and a bed of strawberries.

In closing I would advise you to plant fruit for home use but on the condition that you intend to give it the proper care and grow good fruit. If nothing prevents I'll be with you again next Tuesday.